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Summary record of the 51st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 26 July 2017, at 10 a.m.

President: Ms. Chatardová (Vice-President) ..... (Czechia)

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In the absence of Mr. Shava (Zimbabwe), Ms. Chatardová (Czechia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 17: Non-governmental organizations (*continued*) (E/2017/32 (Part II) and E/2017/L.35)

1. **Mr. Rosselli** (Observer for Uruguay), speaking also on behalf of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Czechia, Finland, France, Iceland, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States, said that the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations played a vital role in accrediting non-governmental organizations to participate in United Nations activities and contribute their valuable perspectives on key issues. Civil society organizations should be accredited in large numbers in order to ensure that diverse and independent voices were heard on matters of public policy. In that regard, the Council's decision to webcast the Committee's public sessions was heartening, as it would allow civil society organizations to witness how the Committee worked and better understand how to engage with it. The welcome move towards further transparency at the United Nations would facilitate stronger civil society involvement.

2. However, more could still be done to enable the Committee to fulfil its mandate to promote and advocate for civil society participation. At the Committee's May 2017 resumed session, its work had been politicized, and a particular organization had not been granted the opportunity to speak after an extensive Committee debate over whether it should be allowed to do so. In order for the Committee to accomplish its core function of recommending the accreditation of non-governmental organizations, the Committee should hear directly from civil society. He hoped that organizations that were already accredited would be allowed to speak at future sessions. He also requested the NGO Branch leadership to ensure that the Committee would hold the requisite consultations with organizations in consultative status to discuss questions of interest relating to the relationship between civil society and the United Nations, as mandated by Council resolution 1996/31, ahead of the Committee's January 2018 session.

3. **Mr. Jürgenson** (Estonia), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States; the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, Liechtenstein, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union welcomed the decisions made by the Committee at its previous session to accredit both new and deferred applicants. He expressed deep concern, however, that an open and fair approach was not uniformly applied to all applicants, and that considerations that should fall outside the Committee's purview were resulting in repeated deferrals of numerous applications. The fact that the Committee had recommended only some 25 per cent of deferred applications for accreditation at its previous session spoke to those concerns. The webcasting of the Committee's proceedings, a welcome step, should help to ensure that all applications for accreditation were considered in a fair manner and in accordance with the letter and spirit of Council resolution 1996/31.

4. The European Union encouraged the Committee to take further steps to enhance its credibility. Referring to the European Union's statement at the April coordination and management meeting, he reiterated the need for the Committee to avoid the ad hoc overriding of the rules established by the Council to govern its work, and to ensure that the voices of civil society, both on general points and on points pertaining to particular applications, were heard during its proceedings. In accordance with resolution 1996/31, the Committee should hold, before each of its sessions, consultations with organizations in consultative status, with a view to monitoring the evolving relationship between non-governmental organizations and the United Nations, and transmit a report to the Council for appropriate action. Doing so would enrich the continuing discussion on the vital contribution of civil society to the Organization, particularly in the light of the impediments faced by non-governmental organizations in the United Nations and in the wider world.

Draft decision E/2017/L.35: Application of the non-governmental organization Fondation Alkarama for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

5. **Mr. Almahmoud** (United Arab Emirates), introducing the draft decision, said that while a wide range of civil society voices should be able to engage with the Organization as a matter of principle, granting consultative status should entail a responsibility to operate in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and Council resolution 1996/31, in order to preserve the Council's integrity and purposes. His Government had designated Fondation Alkarama a terrorist organization under Federal Law No. 7 (2014) on combating terrorism offences, and the entity's

founder, 'Abd al-Rahman al-Nu'aymi, had been placed on the Security Council sanctions list. In the light of such clear connections to terrorist activity, it was alarming that the organization had been recommended for special consultative status. Fondation Alkarama had withdrawn its previous application for consultative status after questions about its links to terrorism had been raised. The organization was now claiming that those questions had been politically motivated. Moreover, Fondation Alkarama's lack of forthrightness might have prevented the Committee from considering the serious issues surrounding its application. Stressing that such an organization should not be granted consultative status, he called on Council members to adopt the draft decision by consensus.

6. **Mr. Bessedik** (Algeria) said that, as Chair of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, Algeria supported and valued the role of civil society in the context of the democratic functioning of international organizations. It also welcomed the recent decision to webcast the Committee's meetings, adding transparency to its deliberations. Conferring consultative status on non-governmental organizations was, in most cases, a matter of course, on the basis of principles clearly articulated in the Charter of the United Nations. While his delegation wholeheartedly supported the granting of consultative status to organizations operating in accordance with the Charter, doing so for organizations whose activities were clearly linked to terrorism was inconceivable. Members of the non-governmental organization Fondation Alkarama were being prosecuted, its sources of financing were questionable and its founder had been placed on the Security Council sanctions list. His delegation therefore supported the draft decision and called on all Council members to follow suit and thereby oppose conferring consultative status on an organization that did not respect the fundamental principles set out in the Charter.

7. **Ms. Tripathi** (India), stressing her country's commitment to combating terrorism in all its forms, said that her delegation supported the decision not to grant consultative status to Fondation Alkarama. Moreover, incoming applications for consultative status would have to be scrutinized far more closely and checked carefully against the list of individuals and entities subject to United Nations sanctions before they reached the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, in order to prevent such a situation from recurring. Indeed, a state of affairs in which an organization being considered for consultative status had been declared a terrorist organization by the Government of the United Arab Emirates and had a founding member subject to United States and United Nations sanctions indicated that immediate corrective action and serious introspection regarding the function of the Committee were in order.

8. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) said that Algeria wished to become a sponsor.

9. *Draft decision E/2017/L.35 was adopted.*

10. **Ms. Amadeo** (United States of America) said that, as a strong supporter of robust civil society participation in the United Nations system, the United States stood in favour of granting consultative status to all non-governmental organizations except those whose activities or sources of funding were linked to terrorism financing or activity. Given that a founding member of Fondation Alkarama had been designated as a terrorist by the United States Department of the Treasury, her delegation had joined consensus on the draft resolution. However, the position taken by her delegation should not be used by others to obstruct the granting of consultative status to civil society organizations involved in the defence of human rights.

Action on recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2017 resumed session (E/2017/32 (Part II))

11. **The President** drew attention to the draft decisions contained in chapter I of the report.

Draft decision I: Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification from non-governmental organizations

12. *Draft decision I, as amended by the adoption of draft decision E/2017/L.35, was adopted.*

Draft decision II: Withdrawal of the consultative status of the non-governmental organization International Chamber of Commerce

Draft decision III: Suspension of the consultative status of non-governmental organizations with outstanding quadrennial reports, pursuant to Council resolution 2008/4

Draft decision IV: Reinstatement of the consultative status of non-governmental organizations that submitted outstanding quadrennial reports, pursuant to Council resolution 2008/4

Draft decision V: Withdrawal of the consultative status of non-governmental organizations, pursuant to Council resolution 2008/4

Draft decision VI: Dates and provisional agenda of the 2018 session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

Draft decision VII: Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2017 resumed session

13. *Draft decisions II, III, IV, V, VI and VII were adopted.*

Agenda item 4: Elections, nominations, confirmations and appointments

Committee of Experts on Public Administration (E/2017/9/Add.9 and Add.10)

14. **The President** invited the Council to turn its attention to the note by the Secretary-General concerning the appointment of 24 experts to the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (E/2017/9/Add.9). The Secretary-General had recommended that the term of office of the members of the Committee should be revised to align it with the Council's July-to-July cycle. The revised term would begin on 1 August and end on 31 July instead of beginning on 1 January and ending on 31 December as was currently the case. She took it that the Council wished to agree to revise the term of office of the 24 experts of the Committee, on a one-time basis, to three years and seven months, beginning on 1 January 2018 and ending on 31 July 2021, on the understanding that the following term of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration would begin on 1 August 2021 and end on 31 July 2025.

15. *It was so decided.*

16. **The President** invited the Council to consider the appointment of 24 members of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration. She took it that the Council approved the nomination by the Secretary-General of the 24 experts listed in documents E/2017/9/Add.9 and Add.10 and agreed to appoint them to the Committee for a term of three years and seven months, beginning on 1 January 2018 and ending on 31 July 2021.

17. *It was so decided.*

Committee for Programme and Coordination

18. **The President** invited the Council to consider an outstanding vacancy on the Committee for Programme and Coordination. In accordance with Council resolution 2008/60 and General Assembly decision 42/450, the members of the Committee were first nominated by the Council and subsequently elected by the General Assembly. He had been advised that the Group of African States had endorsed the candidature of Cameroon to fill a vacancy from the region, for a term beginning on 1 January 2018 and ending on 31 December 2020. In the absence of any other nominations, she took it that the Council wished to nominate Cameroon for election by the General Assembly to the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

19. *It was so decided.*

20. **The President** said that, in the absence of any other candidates for election to the Committee for Programme and Coordination, she took it that the Council wished to further postpone the outstanding vacancies for two members from the African States, one member from the Latin American and Caribbean States and three members from the Western European and other States for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2018 and expiring on 31 December 2020; and for two members from the Western European and other States, both terms beginning on the date of election by the General Assembly, with one term expiring on 31 December 2017 and the second term expiring on 31 December 2018.

21. *It was so decided.*

Executive Board of the World Food Programme

22. **The President** invited the Council to consider the remaining outstanding vacancy on the Executive Board of the World Food Programme. She had been advised that the Group of African States had endorsed the candidature of Lesotho to fill a vacancy from the region, for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2018 and expiring on 31 December 2020. In the absence of any other nominations, she took it that the Council wished to elect Lesotho, by acclamation, to the Executive Board of the World Food Programme.

23. *Lesotho was elected a member of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme by acclamation.*

Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme

24. **The President** invited the Council to take action on an outstanding vacancy in the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme from the Western European and other States. The Group of Western European and Other States had endorsed the candidature of Spain to fill the outstanding vacancy, for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020. In the absence of any other nominations, she took it that the Council wished to elect Spain, by acclamation, to the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

25. *Spain was elected a member of the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme by acclamation.*

26. **The President** said she also took it that the Council decided to further postpone the following outstanding vacancies on the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme: one member from the Latin American and Caribbean States, for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020, and five members from the Western European and other States for terms all beginning on the date of election, two of them expiring on 31 December 2018, one of them expiring on 31 December 2019 and two of them expiring on 31 December 2020.

27. *It was so decided.*

Election of a member of the Council to the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission

28. **The President** invited the Council to elect a member of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission in accordance with Council resolution 2015/1 of 4 March 2015. The Group of Eastern European States had endorsed the candidature of Romania to complete the unexpired portion of the term of Estonia, whose term as a member of the Council would expire on 31 December 2017. She took it that the Council wished to elect, by acclamation, Romania to the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission for a term beginning on 1 January 2018 and expiring on 31 December 2018.

29. *Romania was elected a member of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission by acclamation.*

Postponement of the appointment of the 25 experts to the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters

30. **The President** informed Council members that more time was needed to compile the list of 25 experts to be appointed by the Secretary-General to serve on the Committee in their expert capacity for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 30 June 2021. She therefore proposed that the item, of which the Council was expected to take note, should be postponed to a later date.

31. *It was so decided.*

Conclusion of the 2017 session of the Council

32. **The President** declared that the Council had concluded its third coordination and management meeting and its 2017 session.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.